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News Release

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Man sentenced for filing a false tax return

A man was sentenced today in federal court for filing a false tax return with the United States.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard Kyle sentenced Ellis Alance Banks to 21 months in prison and three years of supervised release on one count of filing a false tax claim. Banks was indicted on April 24, 2009, and pleaded guilty on June 11, 2009.

“The Internal Revenue Service is determined to stop these false tax refund schemes,” said Julio La Rosa, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the IRS-Criminal Investigation Division’s St. Paul office. “The message this case sends is that participation in refund fraud schemes does not pay and those who do will be prosecuted and serve time in prison for their actions.”

Banks prepared dozens of fraudulent returns over a multi-year period on behalf of various individuals. For example, according to the plea agreement entered in this case, Banks admitted making a false claim on January 14, 2005. Specifically, Banks prepared and submitted to the federal government a U.S. Individual Income Tax Return that claimed a false refund of \$4,563.

While Banks pled guilty to the charge relating to his return for tax year 2004, he also admitted submitting false returns for tax years 2005-2008, resulting in \$375,000 in lost taxes to the U.S.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Division and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David M. Genrich.

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Per U.S. Department of Justice policy, the U.S. Attorney’s Office is not allowed to provide the age and city of residence for defendants charged in criminal tax cases.